DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 451 191 SP 039 874

AUTHOR Bernshausen, Diana; Cunningham, Claude
TITLE The Role of Resiliency in Teacher Preparation and Retention.
PUB DATE 2001-03-00
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (53rd, Dallas, TX, March 1-4, 2001).
PUB TYPE Opinion Papers (120) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College School Cooperation; *Coping; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Labor Turnover; *Preservice Teacher Education; Professional Development Schools; *Resilience (Personality); Stress Management; Teacher Burnout; *Teacher Persistence
IDENTIFIERS Caring

ABSTRACT

Significant attrition, high stress levels, and burnout in education indicate that organizational cultures may not provide adequate support for educator resiliency. Teacher retention in a time of teacher shortages is very important. Resiliency development must become a major goal of preservice programs. Resiliency attributes include competence, belonging, usefulness, potency, and optimism. Professional Development Schools are designed to allow for resiliency building at all levels of teacher education. Teacher preparation programs should provide: frequent interactions with credible teacher educators; guided and increasingly responsible interactions with practicing classroom educators; powerful, repeated, and authentic classroom experiences; and high expectations. Resiliency building is not occurring as it should be. Initial teaching assignments often work against resiliency. Inexperienced and less resilient novice teachers have no time to develop tools for succeeding in most settings and burn out early in their careers. Induction programs can help with this problem. Resiliency building requires some to change beliefs and practices and re-evaluate program goals. Individuals must take control of their own wellbeing and develop coping strategies. Preservice and inservice experiences should work proactively with individuals to provide supportive, collegial environments that promote a cooperative spirit and build a sense of belonging and competence. (Contains 21 references.) (SM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 451 191

The Role of Resiliency in Teacher Preparation and Retention

Paper presented at the

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

53rd Annual Meeting

Dallas, Texas

March 1-4, 2001

Presenters:

Dr. Diana Bernshausen
University of North Texas
E-mail: Bernshausen@coefs.coe.unt.edu

Dr. Claude Cunningham
Mansfield Independent School District
E-mail: CUNNCL@mansfieldisd.org

SP039874

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. Bernshausen

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

The Role of resiliency in teacher preparation and retention

Resiliency is the ability to adapt and thus bounce back when faced with conditions that create disequilibria or adversity. USA Today reports that new teachers are both committed and enthusiastic about teaching. Yet enthusiasm cannot sustain a person if they have no resiliency (May 24, 2000). To date, over 40% of incoming teachers do not see their fifth year of teaching, with more than half of these leaving the profession within three years (Colbert & Wolff, 1992, Hardy, L. 1999, Odell & Ferraro, 1992, Texas Education Agency, 1995).

The teacher shortage in Texas affects every region of the state from urban areas to the boarders. The Texas Senate Education Committee cites figures indicating Texas has approximately 63,000 teacher openings each year, but only 22,000 new teachers are available as replacements (Dallas Morning News, 2001).

A major part of the shortage in Texas is the large number of teachers who leave the field so quickly, as well as those who are certified and do not teach. Common reasons cited by teachers for attrition include:

a) lack of administrative, collegial, and parent support,

b) insufficient involvement in decision making (Shann, 1998; see also Gonzales, 1995; Lippmann, et.al., 1996);

c) no or poor induction program for first year teachers (Texas Education Agency, 1995);

d) lack of adequate preparation (Shann, 1998; Texas Education Agency, 1995).

Predicted teacher shortages as well as high attrition rates of novice teachers are still expected to be within the range of 30-50% (Andrew and Schwab, 1995; Arends and Winitzkey, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Mantel-Bromley, Gould, McWhorter, & Whaley, 2000).

School and university partnership initiatives dominate the training of pre-service interns. Those interns entering the teaching profession from professional development school (PDS) programs have increased over the years. The National Commission of Teaching and American Future (1996) challenges the nation to provide every student with access to well-qualified teachers by the year 2006. With four years to go in this challenge, improvement both in how teachers are prepared and in the daily regularities of schooling must be met (Goodlad, 1988, 1990; Holmes, 1986, 1990).

A major goal of pre-professional teacher preparation must become the development of resiliency. Sustaining resiliency becomes the continued joint role of teacher education programs and continuing education programs. The problem thus becomes how to collaboratively design programs that build resiliency and thus equip teachers with the personal strategies they need in order to remain in the profession beyond five years. The partnerships composed of university faculty, school, business, community, and teacher must identify those elements which have positive, neutral, and negative impacts on the indicators of resiliency as defined by Sagor (1993). Program elements, at both the pre-service and in-service levels, with negative impact on Sagor's indicators of resiliency, should be reworked and replaced by enhancement of those elements with positive impact while neutral elements should be carefully analyzed to determine the value of their continuation. Mantle-Bromley, et al. (2000) states that PDS

participation positively affects the attrition of novice teachers. Other studies conducted show that when PDS graduates are more satisfied with their preparation, they are more likely to teach (Blocker and Mantel-Bromley, 1997; Schwab, 1995).

Background

To become empowered, any educator must understand his or her place in the educational arena (Ryel, Bernshausen, & van Tassell, 2001). Both pre-service interns and in-service teachers must feel connected, must have a true sense of self-efficacy, and must develop an attitude of possibility for all responsibilities they face. Sagor (1996) coined the phrase "CBUPO" to describe a set of resiliency attributes that provide people with strength and fortitude to confront overwhelming concerns faced in life. CBUPO is an acronym that stands for the following terms as they apply to resiliency: **C**ompetence **B**elonging, **U**sefulness, **P**otency, which all lead to **O**ptimism. When building resiliency in the education arena, the following questions and results must be considered (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2000), as they lead to enhancing and developing resiliency through CBUPO (Sagor, 1996):

- Competency. In what ways are individual and group competencies developed? Educators must demonstrate competency if other constituents are to place trust in their role with learners.
- Belonging. In what ways are educators encouraged to belong? Maslow taught us well that a sense of belonging is critical to the development of the whole person.
- Usefulness. In what ways are educators encouraged to feel useful? Kohlberg stated that necessity of a sense of initiative, industriousness, and involvement.

- Potency. How is the educator made to feel potent? At this stage of resolution, educators know that they have an important role to play and that they have the power and influence to impact decisions about education and their role in the process.
- Optimism. Feelings of competence, belonging, usefulness, and potency lead to optimism once a person reaches a sustainable level of resiliency.

These questions, when paired with the positive outcomes that result from having addressed and resolved them, promote effective and efficient rebound from set backs or changes that inherently occur when valuable change is in process. Bernshausen and Cunningham (2000) suggested that resiliency equals a unique, powerful, combination of tenacity (willingness to keep trying in the face of set backs), optimism (belief in the probability of success), and impact (commitment to standards). A priority stance regarding teacher resiliency supports the premise that if the well being of the educator is enhanced, so is the well-being of students (Ryel, Bernshausen, & van Tassell, 2001).

Bonnie Bernard (1995) furthers the research on resilience in her meta-analysis in which she identifies three factors of family, school, and environment that alter expected negative outcomes:

1) Caring relationships of at least one person
2) High expectations and the support to meet them
3) Opportunities for participation that are meaningful involvement and responsibility, which is the natural outcome of high expectations.

These same factors can be applied to both pre- and in-service professional development programs.

There are competing studies regarding teacher retention (Betancourt-Smith, Inman, & Marlow, 1994; Borg & Riding, 1991; Chitton & Sistrunk, 1990; Gonzales, 1995; Odell & Ferraro, 1992; Lippman, et al, 1996; Zigarelli, 1996). These studies offer hypotheses that center around salary, ethnicity, school testing conditions and results, school location, and chosen area of teaching as some key elements in teacher attrition. Results of these studies found the elements listed as having no statistical difference in the retaining of teachers. The issues that were defined,

a) lack of administrative, collegial and or parent support;

b) insufficient involvement in decision making,

are elements that could be reworked or eliminated through careful examination and applications of findings in resiliency studies (Abel & Seawell, 1999; Bondy & McKenzie, 1999; Shann, 1998; Shen, 1998; Texas Education Agency, 1995; Zellars, Perrewe, & Hochwater, 1999). Literature pertaining to burnout and teacher mobility supplies key understandings to possible neutral and negative elements that occur at both the pre-and in-service levels of teaching. Most of these elements find their roots in the pre- and in-service teachers' perceived self- efficacy. Research found that when faced with various scenarios, a person's self- efficacy was found to be a key element in cases of stress and burnout. Therefore, how do individuals create a support network and a climate that promotes healthy lifestyles for pre-service interns, in-service teachers, and the students (Eastman, 1996)? What do we do to promote resiliency in pre-service and in-service teachers?

What teacher preparation programs do and can do to promote resiliency

The Professional Development School (PDS) model can build CBUPO through powerful, repeated, and authentic experience. Competence comes from teacher preparation programs that provide:

- frequent, successful interactions with credible teacher educators;
- guided and increasingly responsible interactions with practicing classroom educators;
- powerful, repeated and authentic classroom experiences;
- high expectations.

Blocker and Mantel-Bromley (1997) found PDS graduates more satisfied with preparation, more confident in readiness to students teach and more knowledgeable about schools and school culture.

Belonging comes from teacher preparation programs that provide caring protected learning environments and inclusive involvement with both teacher educators and classroom educators. PDS programs create opportunity for pre-service interns to observe, practice, debrief and reflect with peers and mentors that help them acquire a broad set of understandings and abilities rather than a formulaic set of behaviors that ultimately prove inadequate (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2000). For example, belonging can come from:

- memberships in school-based teams
- active involvement in training and reverse mentoring

The sense of usefulness should be developed as pre-service interns have successful interactions with mentors, single students, small groups, large groups, parents, and administration. Students in PDS classrooms receive more adult help and nurturing because of time pre-service interns spend with them. With more adults available, mentors are more likely to design and add hands on activities and the classroom moves to a more constructivist atmosphere (Trachman, 1998). This is one example of how resiliency benefits children in the classroom.

Potency comes from teacher preparation programs that provide options and assistance in choosing among them, guided and successful initial decisions, and progressively more responsible decision-making. These include:

- focus on each child versus the entire class
- teachers changing what they do because of work with others
- co-teaching with mentors
- co-teaching with other interns
- increased connections between theory and practice
- feeling better prepared for the work of becoming a teacher because they had developed "change agent" orientation
- mentors-PDS work provides significant, structured venues for developing their skills and knowledge (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2000).

Optimism comes from teacher preparation programs that provide:

- a growing sense of competence;
- belonging to a professional group;
- successful interactions with students;

- controlled decision-making which is increasing successful;
- frequent, but not artificial, success.

Lines blurred in the PDS experience should continue. Resiliency must be maintained for the newly graduated novice teacher. It often seems that we do everything in our power to keep novice teachers from being successful.

Maintaining resiliency from pre-service to in-service

Initial teaching assignments work against resiliency. Novice teachers are usually assigned:

- less desirable campuses which leads to discipline issues and defeats usefulness,
- bad conference times which leads to exclusions and defeats belonging,
- remedial classes which are had to teach and defeats competence,
- informal mentors who may or may not actually mentor which defeats potency.

Inexperienced and less resilient novice teachers have no time to develop the tools to be successful in most settings and thus burn out early in their careers. Induction programs have been in place for ten years and were designed to improve teaching performance, increase retention of beginning teachers, and promote personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers.

Resiliency must and can be maintained by:

- providing formal mentor support through induction programs,
- making teaching assignments which are reasonable,
- developing targeted professional development and continuing education

- cohort meetings involving novice teachers in mutual support activities,
- follow-up by university faculty for ongoing support through programs such as Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS).

The blurred lines between university and school campus need to remain blurred. Therefore, the building and sustaining of resiliency is the continued job of both the teacher preparation program and the school campus. The individual plays a role in building self-resiliency as well.

Strategies to support resiliency (Ryel, Bernshausen, and van Tassell, 2001)

Individuals must take responsibility for their own health and well-being. They should develop their own strategies for management of time, relationships (development of emotional support networks and establishing boundaries), nutrition, exercise, finances, and physical space.

Both the pre- and in-service experiences should work with the individual to proactively pursue a supportive collegial network that promotes a cooperative spirit and builds a sense of belonging and competence. These support groups not only enable the novice teacher or intern to manage feelings of isolation, discouragement and/or despair, but also provides a supportive and emotionally safe environment for them. Journaling can help the individual reflect and thus strengthen feelings of usefulness and potency. Journaling also gives insights to those mentoring the novice teacher and can promote improved communication and problem solving skills. Optimism can be maintained through a positive attitude focusing on what is right with their students, the world, and themselves. (Henderson & Milstein, 1996).

Educational organizations, whether they are universities or school districts, must realize that when they invest in the building of resiliency, they invest in not only the well-being of the person but also they invest in the success of students.

Conclusion

As schools, educators, and universities encourage competence, belonging, usefulness, potency, and optimism, resiliency as a lifestyle will be promoted. While resiliency should be the rule rather than the exception, the preponderance of attrition, high levels of stress, and burnout in educational settings indicate that organizational cultures may not be providing adequate interventions and support for educator resiliency. The retention of teachers, in a time when teacher shortage is a critical issue in itself, is of the utmost importance.

Presently, PDS models are designed to allow for resiliency building at all levels of teacher education. The actual building of resiliency however, is not occurring as it should be. The job of resiliency building will require some to change beliefs and practices and re-evaluate program goals. There must be a great deal of collaboration, reflection, design, and redesign. If organizations choose to support individual success in the areas of competence, belonging, usefulness, potency and optimism, a corporate culture of collegiality and safety will hopefully promote the optimal development of the educator. Consequently, when educators are more successful in school and in life, students' chances of learning excellence are greatly enhanced. We must all embrace educator and student success as highly related to success in life (Ryel, Bernshausen, & van Tassell, 2001). This spirit of renewal is crucial to perpetuating both resiliency and every school's mission: success for all.

References

Abel, M., & Seawell, J., (1999). Stress and burnout in rural and urban secondary school teachers. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 90(2), 81-88.

Andrew, M. & Schwab, R, (1995). Has reform in teacher education influenced teacher performance: An outcome assessment of graduates of eleven teacher education programs. *Action in Teacher Education,* 17(3), 43-54.

Arends, R. & Winitzkey, N., (1996). Program structures and learning to teach. In F. B. Murray (Ed), *Democratic Teacher Education,*. (pp.1-27). New York, NY: Teacher College Press.

Bernard, B., (1995). Fostering resiliency in kids. *Educational Leadership*, 51(3), 44-48.

Bernshausen, C., & Cunningham, C., (2000, October). *Collaborative building and maintaining of resilient teachers.* Paper presented at the Texas ASCD Fall 2000 Conference, Houston, Texas.

Betancourt-Smith, M., Inman, D., & Marlow, L. (1994, November). *Professional attrition: An examination of minority and non-minority teachers at-risk.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association. ED388639

Blocker, L. & Mantel-Bromley, C.,(1997). PDS versus campus preparation: Through the eyes of the students. *The Teacher Educator,* 33(2), 70-89.

Bondy, E., & McKenzie, J., (1999). Resilience building and school reconstructionist teaching: A First-year teacher's story. *The Elementary School Journal,*. 100(2),129-150.

Borg, M. & Riding, R., (1991). Occupational stress and satisfaction in teaching. *British Educational Research Journal*, 17(3), 263-281.

Chitton, S., & Sistrunk, W., (1990, November). *The relationship between secondary teachers' job satisfaction and their perceptions of school climate.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA. ED326567

Colbert, J., & Wolff, D., (1992). Surviving in urban schools. *Journal of Teacher Education,* 43, 193-199.

Darling-Hammond, L., (1994). Developing professional development schools: Early lessons, challenges, and promises. In L. Darling-Hammond (Ed.) *Professional development schools: Schools for developing a profession.* (pp.1-27) New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Eastman, W. (1996, May). *Avoiding faculty burnout through the wellness approach.* [on line]. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, Toronto, and Ontario, Canada. ED399987.

Gonzales, P. (1995). Factors that influence teacher attrition. *NSTEP Information Brief No. 1*, (pp 1-9) Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.

Goodlad, J. (1988). School-university partnerships for educational renewal: Rationale and concepts. In. K.A. Scrotnick & J. T. Goodlad (Eds). *School-university partnerships in Action*, (pp 3-31). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Goodlad, J. (1990). *Teachers for our nation's schools.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hardy, L. (1999). Why teachers leave: Recruiting good teachers to only half the challenge-the other half is keeping them in the classroom. *American School Board Journal,* [on line] http://www.asbj.com/199906/0699coverstory.html

Henderson, N. & Milstein, M. (1996). *Resiliency in schools.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Henry, T. (2000, May 24). New teachers are passionate but unprepared. *USA Today, Arlington*, p. D9.

Holmes Group, (1986). *Tomorrow's teachers*, East Lansing, MI: Author

Holmes Group, (1990). *Tomorrow's schools: Principles for the design of professional development schools,* East Lansing, MI: author.

Lippmann, L., Burns, S., McArthur, E., Burton, R., Smith, T., & Kaufman, P. (1996). *Urban Schools: the Challenges, of location and poverty, NCES* pp.96-104. Washington, D.C.: US Department of Education, NCES.

Mantel-Bromley, C., Gould, L., McWhorter, B., & Whaley, D. (2000) The Effect of program structure on new teachers' employment and program satisfaction patterns. *Action in Teacher Education,* 22(1), 1-14.

National Commission of Teaching and America Future, (1996). *What matters most: Teaching for America's future.* New York, NY: author.

Odell, S. & Ferraro, D., (1992). Teacher mentoring and teacher retention. *Journal of Teacher Education.* 43, 200-204.

Ryel, R., Bernshausen, D., & van Tassell, F. (2001, February). *Advocating resiliency through wellness.* Paper presented at the 2001 Association of Teacher Educators annual meeting, New Orleans, LA.

Sagor, R. (1993). *At-risk students: Reaching and teaching them.* Swampscott, MA: Watersun Press.

Sagor, R. (1996). Building resiliency in students. *Educational Leadership*, 54(1), 38-43.

Shann, M., (1998). Professional commitment and satisfaction among teachers in urban middle schools. *Journal of Educational Research*, 92(2), 67-73.

Shen, J., (1998). Teacher retention and attrition in public schools: Evidence from SASS91, *the Journal of Educational Research,* 91 (2), 81-88.

Stutz, T. (2000, December 12). Benefits urged to ease state teacher shortage, *Dallas Morning News,* [on line] http://www.dallasnews.com/texa__southwest/242631_edplan_20tex.A.htm

Texas Education Agency, (1995). Texas teacher retention, mobility, and attrition. In *Teacher Supply, Demand, and Quality Policy Research Project* (Report No.6), Austin, TX: Author.

Trachman, R. (1998). *The NCATE Professional development school study: A Survey of 28 PDS sites.* National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, pp 81-88.

Zellers, K. Perrewe, P. & Hochwater, W. (1999). Mitigating burnout among high NA employees in health care: What can organizations do? *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 29(11), 2250-2271.

Zigarelli, M., (1996). An Empirical test of conclusion from effective schools research. *The Journal of Educational Research,* 90 (2), 103-019,

Assertion 1:

A primary cause of the nationwide teacher shortage is that new teachers leave the profession within two to three years.

Assertion 2:

There are elements of pre-service teacher education that could, but do not, better prepare teachers to confront the rigors of professional practice.

Assertion 3:

There are elements of new teacher induction programs that could, but do not, prepare new teachers to confront the rigors of professional practice.

Assertion 4:

Pre-service teacher programs designed around a PDS model are designed to promote resiliency.

Assertion 5:

Developing collaborations between higher education and K-12 education are building induction models that will contribute to resiliency